

Fort Eustis Gateway and
Warwick Corridor
Business Improvement
Grant

Program Guidelines

City of Newport News

2400 Washington Avenue

Newport News, VA 23607

The purpose of the Fort Eustis Gateway/Warwick Corridor Business Improvement Grant Program is to improve retail and commercial structures and properties located along the upper Warwick business corridor in the Denbigh section of Newport News. This program is designed to provide incentives to property owners desirous of restoring the character, appearance and vitality along Warwick Boulevard between Menchville Road and Fort Eustis Boulevard.

II. Eligible Activities

Eligible exterior improvements include; most upgrades, but not repair and regular maintenance (must be improving site).

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| •Signage | •Roof Improvements |
| •Awnings or Canopies | •Painting – new |
| •Shutters | •Exterior Lighting |
| •Sandblasting | •Doors and Building Displays |
| •Siding | •Windows |
| •Handicap Modifications/Ramps | •Parking Improvements |
| | •Security Cameras |

In no event should the grant be awarded for repairs or improvements if there are already existing code violations at the property requiring corrective actions unless such code violations will be corrected by the applicant as part of the improvement project. The City administers a number of other loan programs, some of which have a commercial rehabilitation component for financing extensive repairs.

III. Funding Levels

Grants will be available in amounts of up to \$30,000. The minimum grant amount is \$5,000. A 50% grant match is required by the property owner for any grant amount over \$5,000. If a grant request is for the minimum \$5,000 amount, there is no match requirement. All approved applicants will receive the initial \$5,000 and the required match is calculated on any amount above the \$5,000. For example, if a request is received for \$30,000 in grant funds, the owner receives \$5,000 and the remaining \$25,000 is received with the contributed match of at least \$25,000 in funds to the project. Any receipt of funds is contingent on the approval of the review/approval committee.

All grants are outright grants, requiring no repayment unless a project is not completed as agreed. In most cases final grant payments will only be upon completion of the project.

IV. Grant Eligibility Requirements

The property being improved must be for profit commercial or retail business facility and must meet the required zoning.

Businesses applying for the grant must be within the eligible grant area (along Warwick Boulevard, between Menchville Road and Fort Eustis Boulevard). The eligible area can also include properties that set no more than 1 block (400 feet) from Warwick Boulevard or contiguous to an existing commercial center that may be more than 400' from Warwick Boulevard yet part of the existing commercial node that is adjacent to Warwick Boulevard (e.g., shopping center). If part of a commercial center or node, building and/or properties must be visible from corridor.

The proposed improvement must conform to the goals and objectives of the Warwick Boulevard Corridor Study adopted by City Council in April, 2004, and must meet all existing code and zoning and engineering requirements. All Newport News real estate and business tax obligations must be current to be eligible for the grant. Only one grant shall be awarded per business and/or commercial property within a 5-year period. City of Newport News employees, IDA/EDA Board members, other city officials and their spouses are not eligible to participate in the grant program.

Grant funds are awarded to applicants who have provided a complete package and have been approved on a first come first served basis until all grant funds are depleted.

V. Application Information

Application will be made to the Newport News Department of Planning for eligibility screening and processing. The application should include:

- A. Completed application form.
- B. A summary of the business and improvements.

- C. Costs of improvement or construction estimates (provide at least two for each major improvement), quotations, receipts, contracts, orders, invoices, leases, schedules of implementation, construction renderings, and appraisals if available to substantiate the cost of the proposed improvements.

VI. Application and Fee Structure

Application Fee \$75.00 – a non-refundable fee will be paid by each applicant at the time of application.

Applicants will normally receive a response within 30 days.

All architects' fees, engineer's fees or any other fees associated with the project shall be responsibility of the applicant (such expenses will not be eligible to be paid from the grant proceeds).

Applications can be obtained at the City's Planning Department (926-8761).

Additional Assistance

Additional assistance is available by calling the City's Department of Development (926-3793).

Business and or property owners may also wish to obtain information on the following incentive programs administered by the City of Newport News:

1. Commercial Rehabilitation Tax Abatement Program
2. Newport News Enterprise Zone Benefits
3. City's Various Small Business Loan Programs